

the opportunity to embarrass and alarm the President. As fast as one modification of the Senate Bill was voted down, he presented another. No limitation was allowed to* the time for which the embargo was to prevail, nor was any class of vessels, except at the discretion of the President, to be exempted. Five days after the Orders in Council reached Jefferson, he signed the act for an absolute embargo and thus became master of the commerce of his country—a power to which neither George III nor Napoleon had ever approached. The reason assigned for the measure was that a lack of trade with the United States would bring England to her knees.

The effects of the Embargo Act were almost immediately felt, and they were felt first by that section of country always most inimical to Republicanism—that is, by New England and the parts of New York adjacent to Canada, where the shipping trade was the chief source of revenue. To suspend this trade even for a day would produce results of inconvenience in thousands of homes. To* suspend it indefinitely meant starvation for the laboring classes and ruin for the wealthy and the moderately well-to-do. Smuggling was inevitable. At first, it was engaged in by the bold and lawless. As the pinch of necessity became greater, it was taken up by citizens usually law abiding. To enforce the law in great seaports and centers of population was not difficult, but to enforce it along the Canadian border was impossible. Jefferson issued a proclamation directed against the people around Lake Champlain as conspirators and insurgents. The proclamation was not heeded, and acts of violence became frequent along the whole border. More serious for the President than these insurrections was the steady opposition developed in the thickly settled sections of New England, where town after town passed resolutions denouncing the act and even threatening a dissolution of the Union. The election in many of those States had in the spring gone overwhelmingly Anti-Republican. When Congress met in November, 1808, the Federalists felt bold enough to move the repeal of the Embargo Act. The administration had nothing to show as its results but suffering at home and failure abroad. The President